

# St. James United Church

A Community of Friends in Faith



Church Office: 722-1881

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## **December 12, 2021 – Third Sunday of Advent**

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft

Organist: Bob Rose

Music Leadership: Senior Choir

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## We Come to Worship

### **MUSICAL PRELUDE**

### **WELCOME**

*We extend words of greeting in M'ikmawi'simk, Swahili, Greek and English.*

### **HYMN: "Hail to God's Own Anointed" *Voices United* 30**

Hail to God's own anointed,  
great David's greater Son!  
Hail, in the time appointed,  
God's reign on earth begun!  
Christ comes to break oppression,  
to set the captive free;  
to take away transgression,  
and rule in equity.

Christ comes with justice surely  
to those who suffer wrong,  
to help the poor and needy,  
and bid the weak be strong,  
to give them songs for sighing,  
their darkness turn to light,  
whose souls, condemned and dying,  
are precious in his sight.

Christ shall come down like showers  
upon the fruitful earth,  
and love, joy, hope, like flowers,  
spring in his path to birth.  
Before him on the mountains  
shall peace, the herald, go,  
and righteousness in fountains  
from hill to valley flow.

To him shall prayer unceasing  
and daily vows ascend,  
his kingdom still increasing,  
a kingdom without end.  
The tide of time shall never  
his covenant remove.  
His name shall stand for ever:  
that name to us is Love.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND AND KINSHIP**

*We give thanks for the land and the Indigenous peoples who steward it.*

## **ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING**

One: As we light our third candle, let us focus on the flame, aware of the light that flickers within and around us, gift of God's Spirit.

*(Pause in Silence)*

Two: *God of the dawn, as the flame begins to burn, let your Spirit sing in our hearts, announcing the coming of your Holy Child.*

**All: May our waiting for Jesus' birth be accompanied by the song of angels, glorying in how he brings your gift of grace.**

**SUNG RESPONSE:** "A Candle Is Burning" *Voices United 6, v.3*

**A candle is burning, a candle of joy,  
a candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.  
Our hearts fill with wonder and eyes light and glow  
as joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.**

## **We Share**

### **OUR LIFE AND WORK**

*We acknowledge the connection between our work and our worship as we take time to announce what is going on in our congregation and community.*

### **RECOGNITION OF OFFERINGS AND OFFERTORY PRAYER**

*We acknowledge the ways people contribute to the community of faith and wider community, especially by way of supporting St. James UC financially.*

**ANTHEM:** "Ding Dong Merrily on High" (G.R. Woodward)

## **We Listen**

**PREPARING THE WAY:** Isaiah 12:2-6

### **PRAYER OF AWAKENING**

One: ...Like birds at twilight, the angels sing to announce a new day. We join our song of joy to theirs.

**All: Eternal Spirit, singing sacred mystery into life, with great anticipation we await the Christ Child lighting the way before us. As we draw closer to your dawn, lift our voices to sing his new song. We pray in the name of the one who comes. Amen.**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS:** Zephaniah 3:14-20

Luke 3:7-18

**HYMN:** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" *Voices United 1, v. 1, 6*

*(Please stay seated as we reflectively sing two verses of this song)*

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lowly exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

**Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

O come, O Dayspring, from on high,  
and cheer us by your drawings nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

**Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**POEM:** "Lift Up Your Heads" by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

**MESSAGE:** "The Truth about Joy"

### **We Respond**

**HYMN:** "On Jordan's Bank" *Voices United 20*

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
announces that the Lamb is nigh;  
awake and hearken, for he brings  
glad tidings of the King of Kings.

Then cleansed be every breast from sin;  
make straight the way for God within;  
and let each heart prepare a home  
where such a mighty guest may come.

In you, we find abundant life,  
our refuge in the midst of strife;  
without your grace we waste away  
like flowers that wither and decay.  
Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,  
and help us rise to fall no more.  
O let your face upon us shine,  
and fill the world with love divine.

All praise to you, eternal Son,  
whose advent has our freedom won;  
and praise to God whom we adore,  
with Holy Spirit evermore.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*We pray for the needs of our global and local communities, responding to the words "God hear us" with "Come, O come, Emmanuel."*

### THE PRAYER OF JESUS *(based on the original Aramaic):*

**Radiant One: your Name shines within us, outside us - even darkness shines in you. Create your reign now, that your one desire acts with ours, as in all light so in all things. Grant what we need each day in bread and insight. Forgive our hidden past, our secret shames, as we forgive what others hide. Keep us from forgetfulness, the temptation of false appearances and free us to walk your path with light and joy. For from you arises every vision; to you returns the birthing glory of the cosmos. Amen.**

### We Leave to Serve

#### HYMN: "Joy Is Now in Every Place" *Voices United 45*

Joy is now in every place,  
Christmas lightens every face;  
now be with us, in your grace,  
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.

May the star that shone that night,  
making your poor stable bright,  
fill our hearts with love and light,  
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.

Through the New Year let it stay,  
leading us upon your way,  
making Christmas every day,  
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.

Now and ever may we find  
your good news to fill our minds:  
peace and love to humankind,  
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.

## BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

### ORGAN POSTLUDE

*At the end of today's service, the family of the late Ruby Hiscock will remain in the sanctuary if anyone would like to offer their condolences to them.*

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## **St. James United Church**

Lead Minister:	James Ravenscroft, OM
Youth/Christian Education Minister:	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Minister Emeritus:	Rev. Dr. Donovan Brown
Music Director:	Amy Dalziel
Associate Music Director:	Alba Chen
Technology Support:	Jake Thompson
Office Administrator:	Tracy Bishop
Church Custodian:	Bruce Winsor